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May 1989

The Waning Influence Of Newspaper Unions

The Journal of the American Newspaper Publishers Association

ANPA 103rd Annual Convention

to advance the cause of a free press

CHICAGO CONVENTION REPORT

presstime

INDEX | VOLUME 11, NUMBER 5 | MAY 1989

Convention Report *The most complete coverage anywhere of ANPA's 103rd Annual Convention in Chicago. Speakers ranged from those in the highest levels of government to those in the grass roots of the newspaper industry. They grappled with some of the biggest issues of our time: education, literacy, solid waste disposal, the potential of telecommunications and the workforce of the future. Throughout, but particularly on the last day, they focused on this year's theme, "Readership and Circulation"—a topic that increasingly is dominating all newspaper get-togethers.* **34**

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CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

Establishing the goals for ANPA's activities

As I assume from Punch Sulzberger the responsibility of speaking in this space, it is not without trepidation. Punch enriched our lives with his vast experience, wisdom and wit. The saving grace is that the things Punch started us doing, we need to continue.

Circulation and readership in all aspects remain atop our agenda and embrace many related segments such as editorial excellence, distribution efficiency, production quality and customer service. In concert with the Newspaper Advertising Bureau, we'll move on this front in full force.

William H. Cowles 3rd

Daily circulation last year was almost 63 million—an increase of 125,000 over 1987. Sunday circulation is at an all-time high of nearly 63 million as well. Non dailies—paid circulation and free—add another 53 million. But in many of our communities we are slipping in comparison to population growth.

Advertisers invested more than $31 billion in newspapers in 1988, a 6.1-percent increase over the previous year. That amounts to a 26.3-percent share of total advertising dollars spent. The problem is that it's a half a percent lower than 1987. Here, full support for the Bureau will pay off.

New entrepreneurial opportunities will be an industry target, too. That means development of information services that complement and strengthen our newspapers—in the first instance, probably, audiotex enhancements—put in place in cooperation, not competition, with telephone companies. And it means helping our editors take advantage of new tools and innovations, like the mind-stretching deliberations of New Directions for News and constantly evolving technologies such as pagination and PC-based color separation for photos and artwork.

Newspaper recycling and other uses of our used-newsprint resource will occupy much attention as we work with our newsprint-producer colleagues, with state and local legislators and with advanced-research scientists. Newsprint is a resource—as it is being read and after it has been read!

Government relations will require constant vigilance, particularly as federal and state officials worry over revenues and taxes to raise them.

Workforce diversity is a personal goal I fully share with Punch and all of you. Last year we saw more and more women and minority employees on the job in our plants; that's both good policy and good business. People are our greatest resource, and we'll work to give them the tips, tools and training they need to manage and work well with innovation and imagination.

And *customer service*, which is much on your minds, applies also at The Newspaper Center as our staff works even harder to respond to your needs promptly, usefully and thoughtfully.

I'm honored to serve as your chairman. Give me your ideas; share your complaints. I am not ANPA. You are. I just work here. And so do you!

Bill Cowles

William H. Cowles 3rd
ANPA Chairman

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Supplemental Wires Vie for Clients

BY ROLF RYKKEN
presstime staff writer

In April, the Los Angeles Times/Washington Post News Service began offering an abbreviated version of its daily news wire developed specifically for smaller dailies and weekly newspapers.

In February, the Newhouse News Service started a new beat on Capitol Hill to focus on explanatory and analytical stories about the U.S. Congress and the political process.

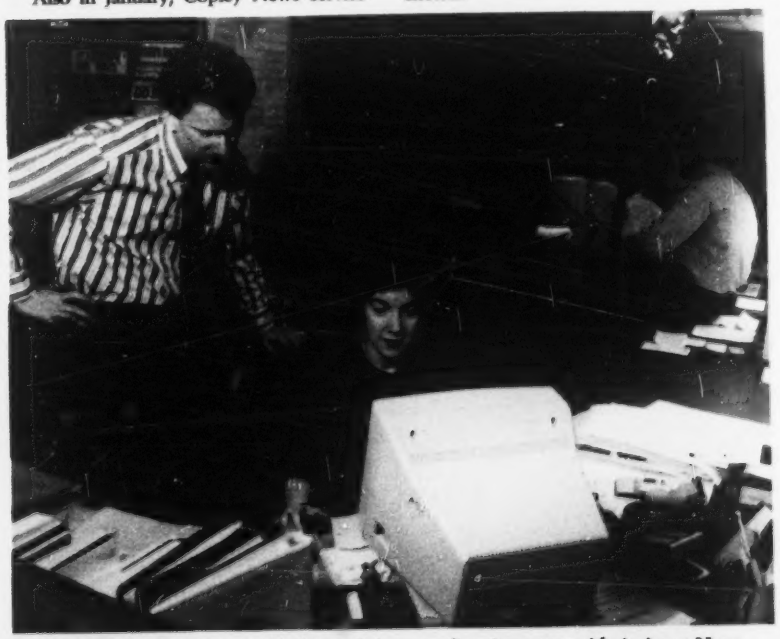
In January, Knight-Ridder/Tribune News Information Services and The New York Times News Service started feeding photographs on a 24-hour basis as an experiment to about 20 subscribers each. Until then this type of offering was chiefly the purview of the larger general news wires—the Associated Press and United Press International.

Also in January, Copley News Service opened a bureau in Mexico to broaden its coverage.

The new bureau, the new beat, the 24-hour photo service and the compact news report are among a host of recent initiatives by what are categorized as "the supplementals." The objective is to stand out in an increasingly competitive field, says Newhouse News Service Editor Robert G. Fichenberg.

Newspapers and their readers are the clear beneficiaries of the new offerings.

"If I were a newspaper editor, I'd be delighted," says Walter F. Mahoney, vice president/sales for the Tribune Media Services syndicate, which sells the newly expanded KRTN wire [presstime, Nov. 1988, p. 78]. "They're getting access to so many choices."



C. David Rambo

KRTN News Editor Margaret Alford (seated, foreground) reviews story with Assistant News Editor Andy Mosher in Washington, D.C., newsroom. In background are (from left) Lifestyle Editor Karen Kirk, Entertainment Editor John Price and Assistant Editor Mike Duggan.

Mark Silverman, executive editor of The Rockford Register Star, Rockford, Ill., could not agree more.

"The supplementals are trying to sell services that are in great demand," he says. "There is a great market for it, and they have something to sell."

Evidence of the healthy market can be seen in the dramatic growth in the number of newspapers that have turned to these wires to augment their coverage from the full-fledged wire services. The supplementals have seen their subscriber rolls increase substantially over the past dozen years.

Editors at both newspapers and the supplementals say technological advances that enable newspapers to receive more stories and other features with greater speed have contributed to the boom.

Newspapers pay from $1,000 to several thousand dollars a year to buy a supplemental service, according to their editors, depending on circulation size and negotiating ability.

While the supplementals are experiencing steady growth, they are wary of where the heightened competition might lead. Notes Dan K. Thomassen, editor and vice president of Scripps Howard News Service, "It's a battle for clients."

The rise of the supplementals also reflects in part the continuing struggle for survival at UPI. Many newspaper editors say their selection of supplementals' offerings has been made necessary because of the void created by UPI's decade-long decline.

UPI has repeatedly declined to disclose the number of its newspaper clients, but the AP membership department, which tracks its competitor, puts the number at 222 receiving the full-service wire. The number doesn't reflect the clients who subscribe only to parts of the UPI service, such as the photo or sports wires. AP has 1,400 newspaper members receiving its full report.

Dwight Geduldig, senior vice president for corporate relations says UPI remains a full-service news wire, unlike any of the supplementals.

Some newspaper editors say their use of certain stories from the supplementals also is

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

Supplemental Wire Services in the United States

	Newspaper clients worldwide	North American clients	Stories moved daily	Average number of words per story
Los Angeles Times/ Washington Post	629	n/a*	125	800
The New York Times News Service	550	350	125	900
Scripps Howard News Service	350	330	70	500
KRTN Information Services	270	n/a*	200	800/news 1,400/features
Copley News Service	175	175	40	800
Christian Science Monitor News Service	118	n/a*	25	700
Newhouse News Service	77	77	30	800

*Not available

based on the view that the supplementals at times can be superior to the AP in terms of analysis and in-depth reporting.

The supplemental news services, says Rockford's Silverman, provide "a dimension, a texture in coverage, you don't get from AP. With UPI no longer formidable, AP has gone down. It is one dimensional."

While AP Executive Editor Bill Ahearn acknowledges increased competition from the supplementals, he denies that AP has become "fat and lazy." He says AP provides good writing, analyses and interpretation—and will do so increasingly.

Paul Janensch, president of the Associated Press Managing Editors association, says the supplementals pose "a challenge to AP." They "are getting better and more ambitious and more comprehensive," says Janensch, general manager and editor of The Journal News in Rockland County, N.Y.

THE CHOICES. The supplementals are so named because they are historically viewed as complementary to the more broad-based services.

"We're alternatives, supplementals," says Scott Bosley, editor of KRTN, one of the commonly regarded four main supplementals. "We get 'people stories' as quickly as we can, but not instantly.

Using stories by national reporters from the Knight-Ridder and Tribune companies written specifically for the service allows KRTN to "provide better writing, because we have more time to do so, and we're more interpretive," he says.

Like KRTN, Scripps Howard also uses stories written specifically for its wire from some of its parent company's national reporters, as well as stories from group-member papers and other contributing papers. The others of the major four, the larger NYTNS and LAT/WP, use stories only from their parent papers and other contributing papers.

NYTNS, begun briefly in 1899, was reestablished in 1917; SHNS was also founded in 1917; LAT/WP was started in 1963; and KRTN (which changed its name in October from KNT) was launched a decade later.

"The four of us are different enough so that papers can pick two or three," says Douglas A. Gripp, executive editor and editorial director of LAT/WP.

That is what many newspapers do, say wire editors interviewed for a 1988 APME General News Committee Report, "Wire Editors: Who's Doing the Job?"

The committee received responses from 144 wire editors who were asked specifically about which of the four larger supplementals they receive.

Fifty percent said their papers received NYTNS, 44 percent received LAT/WP, 35 percent Scripps Howard and 29 percent KRTN.

"What the supplementals offer is access to the reporting resources of some of the biggest U.S. newspapers," wrote Jonathan Fenby in his 1986 book, *The International News Services*. "Instead of receiving two wire services providing much the same copy, an editor can publish star reporters from The New York Times, the Los Angeles Times or The Washington Post."

The other nationally available, non-specialized supplemental wires in the United States are Newhouse News Service, Copley News Service and The Christian Science Monitor News Service.

(A handful of supplementals, including Gannett News Service and Ottaway News Service, provide stories only to newspapers in their own groups; such services cannot be purchased by outsiders.)

Two other news services—Reuters and Agence France Presse—are international, full-service wires, but because their coverage is not concentrated in North America, they are used as supplementals here.

London-based Reuters serves clients in 150 countries [presstime, Aug. 1983, p. 38], says Andrew Nibley, executive editor of Reuters North America. About 200 papers in the United States and Canada now get the Reuters wire, compared with 140 six years ago.

Agence France Presse, based in Paris, has also made some inroads into the North American market. Four years ago, the wire had no North American newspaper clients receiving its services directly [presstime, Nov. 1985, p. 69]. Today, four U.S. and 13 Canadian newspaper subscribers directly receive AFP's photographic service and an English-language version of its international news report, says U.S. Manager Philippe Gustin. Seventeen other U.S. subscribers receive the photographic service only.

There are also three Canadian supplemental wires, says Bryan Cantley, manager, editorial services, of the Canadian Daily

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Newspaper Publishers Association. They are Southam News, Dow Jones Canada and the French-language Telbec service.

GROWTH IN THE '80s. The number of subscribers to the four major supplemental wires in the United States has soared during the 1980s.

LAT/WP has the greatest distribution: 629 newspaper clients worldwide with a total circulation of 110 million. (See chart, p. 15.) Ten years ago, the service had fewer than 200 newspaper subscribers. "It has been a heavy growth," observes Gripp.

In additon, LAT/WP sells an all-sports wire started in 1984 to 167 papers worldwide.

Other supplementals report rapid growth, too: NYTNS, from 285 newspaper subscribers in 1983 to 550 today; KRTN, from 30 in '78 to 270 today; and Scripps Howard News Service, from the 21 Scripps Howard papers in the early '80s to 350 subscribers today.

Editor Thomassen says the latter's phenomenal growth can be linked to the decision by the Scripps family to sell UPI, which it did in 1982. Two years later, SHNS was made available to non-group papers for the first time.

Sixty to 70 percent of our growth in the last two years has been in the secondary markets.

Dan K. Thomassen
Scripps Howard News Service

Selling stories to all takers helps to defray the cost of providing a news service to members of a newspaper group, although a supplemental service is not going to be a "big profit center," notes Bosley of KRTN.

Executives of the supplementals decline to divulge what they charge for their services, but some of the purchasing newspapers are willing to say how much they pay.

For example, The Register-Guard in Eugene, Ore., subscribes to NYTNS for $7,800 a year and LAT/WP for $12,700 a year. For the full AP news and sports wire and photo and graphics services, the paper pays $197,000 annually, says Thomas Jacques, assistant managing editor.

The Spartanburg (S.C.) Herald-Journal pays $9,600 a year for KRTN including its graphics service, according to Allen Parsons, managing editor.

The Victor Valley (Calif.) Daily Press pays $1,440 a year for SHNS, which it has been receiving for about nine months. "It's awesome how little I pay for that," says Editor Stephen M. Williams. He says he pleaded poverty in order to get such a low rate, because he can't really afford another supplemental beyond the NYTNS, which costs the Daily Press $3,300 a year.

In addition to bringing in additional revenue, the wires give the parent papers enhanced prestige.

The original idea for LAT/WP was to offer "the high quality of writing of the two parent papers" to other papers, says Gripp. "It's an extension of what the papers do. It projects our logos worldwide."

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Also, says Albert Johnson, executive managing editor of the Post-Tribune of Gary, Ind., "Some of it has to do with the corporations feeling a need to establish themselves as authoritative leaders in the industry."

The first-tier supplementals have achieved near-saturation in the major markets, so they are looking to the smaller markets for new growth, says Thomassen. "Sixty percent to 70 percent of our growth in the last two years has been in the secondary markets," he says, echoing remarks from some of the other supplementals.

In 1986, Scripps Howard developed, heavily promoted and sold a tailored package for small- and medium-size newspapers. Called "Design," the package features a smaller menu and briefer stories. KRTN announced last November that it would begin offering a similar package called "Select." LAT/WP's shorter version, called "Basic Service," on April 1 began distributing about 50 stories of 600 words each.

NYTNS, which started its "Pony" package for smaller papers about 10 years ago, is currently restructuring that tailored service, says Executive Editor John Brewer. He says the old one will be phased out and a new one offered in its place.

> *"We have our professional pride, and we won't sit still."*
>
> Bill Ahearn
> Associated Press

NUDGING AP AND UPI. All of this activity has not gone unnoticed by AP and UPI.

Several newspaper editors interviewed by presstime say the supplemental wires' growth and their increased competition have contributed to UPI's erosion, something the century-old service only partially acknowledges.

Geduldig says UPI may have lost subscribers to the supplemental wires but says those newspapers are "mixing apples and oranges" by exchanging a full-service wire for a secondary one.

AP concedes there has been an increased use of supplementals as well as dissatisfaction among some editors with AP's report.

Executive Editor Ahearn responds, "We have our professional pride, and we won't sit still." He maintains that AP has always provided the kind of analysis, good writing and interpretative reporting some editors say they get from the supplementals, but he predicts that it will emphasize these areas even more in the future. "We're AP—aggressive, aggressive, aggressive," he says.

With AP and UPI looking over their shoulders at the supplementals, and with the supplementals themselves competing vigorously for additional subscribers, the biggest benefactors will continue to be newspapers and their readers.

The supplementals, says Williams of the Victor Valley Daily Press, add "a flavor, a spice," and their continued competition "is wonderful for newspapers." □

The 90th Annual Conference of the International Circulation Managers Association

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On June 25-28, 1989, circulation and newspaper executives from the United States and the world will gather in Nashville, Tennessee to discuss strategies and solutions for dealing with the challenges of today and tomorrow—such challenges as leadership training, carrier safety, carrier recruitment and retention, budgeting, newsprint control, customer service, single-copy marketing, home delivery, direct mail, and telemarketing.

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Consumption drops in February

Preliminary estimates indicate newsprint consumption by all U.S. users totaled 921,313 metric tons in February, a decrease of 4.4 percent compared with the 29-day February 1988. Taking this extra day into account, February consumption was down by 1 percent.

For the first two months of 1989, overall consumption declined 1.9 percent. Adjusted, the decrease was 0.2 percent.

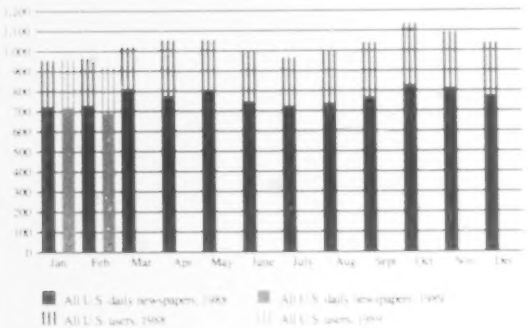
U.S. daily newspapers used 693,566 tons of newsprint during the month, 5-percent less than the amount consumed in February 1988.

For January and February combined, their consumption decreased 2.8 percent. Adjusting for the extra day in 1988, the decreases were 1.7 percent for February and 1.1 percent for the two-month period.

Newsprint inventories for newspapers in ANPA's statistical sample averaged a 44-day supply in February—the same as a year earlier.

Canadian newsprint mills operated at 99 percent of rated capacity in February and for the year to date. U.S. mills operated at 93.8 percent and 95.3 percent, respectively.

Estimated newsprint consumption, 1988-1989 (thousands of metric tons)



Estimated consumption of all U.S. daily newspapers[1]

Region	January 1989(p)	January 1988	% Change
Northeast	175,805	181,377	-3.0
North Central	148,188	149,848	-1.1
South	226,393	220,006	+2.9
West	167,280	169,823	-1.5
Circulation Size			
up to 25,000	52,455	52,676	-0.4
25,001-100,000	194,771	190,690	+2.1
Over 100,000	510,542	517,688	-1.4
January totals	757,766	761,054	-0.5
Region	**February 1989(p)**	**February 1988**	**% Change**
Northeast	166,769	184,731	-9.7
North Central	144,675	150,966	-4.8
South	220,393	227,621	-3.2
West	161,729	167,708	-3.6
Circulation Size			
up to 25,000	52,026	55,317	-5.9
25,001-100,000	151,898	154,687	-1.8
Over 100,000	489,622	520,414	-5.9
February totals	693,566	730,418	-5.0
Two-month totals	1,411,332	1,491,472	-2.8

Estimated consumption of all U.S. users

	1988	1987	% Change
December totals	1,037,485(r)	1,049,980	-1.2(r)
Twelve-month totals	12,336,934(r)	12,322,953	+0.1
	1989	**1988**	
January totals	963,545(r)	957,597	+0.6(r)
February totals	921,313(p)	963,880	-4.4(p)
Two-months totals	1,884,858(p)	1,921,477	-1.9(p)

Production

	Canada	U.S.A.	North America
February 1989	777,326	403,595	1,180,921
February 1988	814,596	434,424	1,249,020
Decrease	-37,270	-30,829	-68,099
	-4.6%	-7.1%	-5.5%
Two months 1989	1,627,671	863,835	2,491,506
Two months 1988	1,636,377	886,711	2,523,088
Decrease	-8,706	-22,876	-31,582
	-0.5%	-2.6%	-1.3%

Shipments

From Canadian mills	U.S.A.	Canada	Export	Total
February 1989	222,888	410,462	444,976	1,078,326
February 1988	274,691	437,852	466,449	1,178,992
Two months 1989	494,337	867,732	922,491	2,284,560
Two months 1988	512,814	849,990	942,010	2,304,814
Increase or	18,711	17,742	19,481	20,254
decrease	3.6%	+2.1%	+2.1%	-0.9%
From U.S. mills				
February 1989	373,204		16,220	389,424
February 1988	411,872		33,900	445,772
Two months 1989	799,840		34,737	834,577
Two months 1988	824,615		47,316	871,931
Increase or	24,786		12,579	37,354
decrease	3.0%		+26.6%	-4.3%
From North American mills				
February 1989	596,092	410,462	461,196	1,467,750
February 1988	686,563	437,852	500,349	1,624,764
Two months 1989	1,294,177	867,732	957,228	3,119,137
Two months 1988	1,337,429	849,990	989,326	3,176,745
Increase or	43,252	17,742	32,098	57,608
decrease	3.2%	+2.1%	+3.2%	-1.8%

Stocks

U.S. publishers[2]	Tonnage	Days supply on hand	Days supply in transit
December 1988	932,492	42	2
December 1987	980,819	44	3
January 1989	937,966(r)	41(r)	2
January 1988	969,240	43	3
February 1989	932,157(p)	39(p)	3(p)
February 1988	940,983	42	2
Canadian mills			
February 1989	424,946	----	----
February 1988	327,945	----	----
U.S. mills			
February 1989	113,912	----	----
February 1988	107,178	----	----

Based on statistical data from newspapers in ANPA statistical sample. Footnotes (figures) other tables are in metric tons.

Represents stocks of newspapers in ANPA statistical sample.
(r) = revised (p) = preliminary